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NON-FASTAG VEHICLES TO BE CHARGED TWICE THE TOLL FEE IF PAID VIA CASH

Vehicles entering a toll plaza without a valid, functional FASTag will be charged twice the regular amount if users pay via cash

THOSE PAYING WITH UPI TO BE CHARGED 1.25X

Under the new rule, non-FASTag users who choose to pay the fee via the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) will be charged only 1.25 times the applicable user fee for that category of vehicle, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) said. For instance, if the fee is ₹100 with a valid FASTag, it will be ₹125 if paid via UPI and ₹200 if paid in cash | **P9**

PART OF GOVT'S DIGITAL PAYMENTS PUSH

- "To incentivise digital payments and eliminate cash transactions at the user fee plazas, the Government of India has amended National Highways Fee Rules, 2008," the ministry said in a press release
- The goal is to enhance transparency in toll operations and improve the overall experience of those travelling on national highways, it said

Nov 15
WHEN THE NEW RULES WILL COME INTO EFFECT

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

CBC 15502/13/0032/2526
GST Bachat Utsav
I CAN BUY MY DREAM BIKE AT A LOWER COST NOW
FESTIVE SEASON OF SAVINGS
SCOOTERS/BIKES UP TO 349cc ARE CHEAPER BY NEARLY ₹8,000
भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF BHARAT

PLOT THICKENS

Bandmate claims Zubeen was poisoned

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

IN a startling claim, late singer Zubeen Garg's bandmate Shekhar Jyoti Goswami has alleged that the singer was poisoned by his manager Siddharth Sharma and the organiser of the 4th edition of the North East India Festival Shyamkanu Mahanta.

Garg died under mysterious circumstances in Singapore on September 19 while swimming in the sea.

Zubeen Garg

According to the 'Detailed Grounds of Arrest' or remand note for the singer's manager, Goswami stated that during the critical moment when Garg was gasping for air and nearly drowning, Sharma was heard shouting, "*jabo de, jabo de*" (let him go, let him go). When Garg began frothing at the mouth and nose, Sharma reportedly dismissed it as "acid reflux" and assured others there was no cause for concern. Rather than seeking urgent medical assistance, Sharma allegedly facilitated Garg's death, Goswami claimed.

In another development, Zubeen Garg's wife Garima on Saturday returned the postmortem report of her husband to the police, saying that it is not her "personal document". On Goswami's startling revelations, Garima said, "If Shekhar had known it, why did he hide it for so long?" **P9**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi honouring a youth in New Delhi | PTI

Modi assails 'theft' of Jan Nayak honour

Karpoori Thakur lauded that way; Cong 'bestows' it on Rahul

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

LAUNCHING skilling projects for the youth worth ₹62,000 crore, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday lit into poll-bound Bihar's Opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), blaming it for ruining the state's education and economy during its rule, alleging it opened the floodgates of mass migration out of the state.

He also mocked Rahul Gandhi, whom the Congress has been trying to project as a 'Jan Nayak' (leader of the masses), accusing the party of 'stealing' the honorific associated with respected OBC leader and former Bihar chief minister Karpoori Thakur. It was the love and respect of the people that gave Thakur the moniker, he quipped, not social media. "The new generation might not know how the RJD rule had wreaked havoc in Bihar, as the state has since been brought back on the track of development," Modi said. He complimented the Nitish Kumar government for a major turnaround in the state.

Modi launched PM-SETU (Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs), a centrally sponsored scheme with an investment of ₹60,000 crore. India's ITIs are not only an important centre for industrial education but also serve as workshops for 'aatmanirbhar Bharat', he said.

The youth-centric projects, he emphasised, would play a vital role in development and empowerment. The PM commended Nitish for providing nearly 10 lakh permanent government jobs to Bihar's youth, saying the idea is to ensure youngsters of the state get employment in Bihar itself so as to stop migration.

> Bihar is one of the states with the highest proportion of youth... compared to the Oppn govt in the past, Bihar's education budget has been increased manifold
>
> Narendra Modi

₹1K dole to Bihar grads

One of the schemes launched was to give 5 lakh grads in Bihar a monthly allowance of ₹1,000 each for two years

Plan to upgrade 1K ITIs

PM-SETU to upgrade 1,000 govt ITIs in a hub-and-spoke model comprising 200 hub ITIs and 800 spoke ITIs

Centre makes U-turn on cough syrup; MP, Rajasthan, TN ban it

KAVITA BAJELI DATT @ New Delhi

HOURS after denying that controversial cough syrup Coldrif, which led to deaths of children in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, did not contain industrial chemical diethylene glycol (DEG), the Union Health Ministry on Saturday made a U-turn and confirmed its presence based on a report of Tamil Nadu's Food and Drug Administration department.

The Ministry's earlier denial followed a clearance from the Madhya Pradesh Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which had then stated that no DEG was found in the syrup.

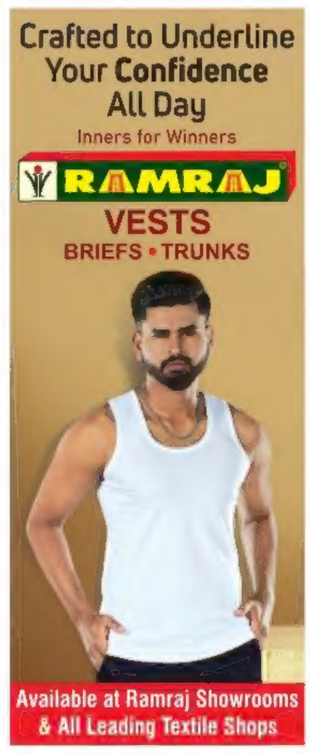
After the confirmation on Saturday, Tamil Nadu was the first to ban Coldrif cough syrup, followed by MP and Kerala.

An official inspects Coldrif syrup in Jabalpur on Saturday | PTI

Coldrif was being manufactured at Sresan Pharma's Kanchipuram unit. The controversy snowballed after nine children died in MP's Chhindwara district, seven from the cough syrup, while two kids died in Rajasthan. The cough syrup stocks had been distributed to Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

In a statement, the Union Health Ministry on Saturday said, "On the request of the MP Govt, Tamil Nadu FDA had taken samples of Coldrif Cough Syrup from the manufacturing premises of M/s Sresan Pharma in Kanchipuram, TN. The results of testing these samples were shared with us late on October 3. They contained DEG beyond the permissible limit."

The Tamil Nadu Drugs Control Department on Friday issued an immediate stop-production order to the manufacturer of Coldrif after the samples were found to be "adulterated with DEG."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DKS 'uncomfortable' with survey queries

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE delayed Socio-Economic and Educational survey, or caste Survey, in Bengaluru began with a "drama" as enumerators conducting the survey treated Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar like a common man and posed all 60 questions, making him "uncomfortable".

The enumerators, along with senior officers of the Backward Classes Department, KV Rajendra, Commissioner, Bengaluru West City Corporation, and Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner for Revenue, Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), arrived at the DCM's Sadashivanagar residence on Saturday, where his family was present.

Deputy CM D K Shivakumar fields queries from enumerators of Socio-Economic and Educational Survey at his residence in Sadashivanagar, Bengaluru, on Saturday

The DCM, who started fielding the questions patiently, felt that certain posers were too 'personal'. "Is there a need to ask about cattle, poultry, tractor, court cases and diseases? Make it simple. Social and economical information is enough. People will get exhausted. I only lost patience. Will the public be patient in answering all the questions," Shivakumar reacted.

He later instructed the secretary concerned, Tulasi Maddineni, to reduce the number of questions. He advised the enumerators in the city to be sensible, as people lose patience about queries on sheep, poultry and jewellery they own.

"They (enumerators) also asked me such questions. I may have them (cattle and hens) at my village. People in rural areas may give details with patience, but city residents may lose it," he remarked. He also felt the process was too long as it took over an hour to complete the survey of his family, while enumerators are expected to spend 20 minutes per household. **CONTINUED ON: P2**

As onion prices fall, IISc's agri saviour technology keeps waiting in the wings

BOSKY KHANNA & MALLIKARJUN HIREMATH @ Bengaluru / Dharwad

PRICE fluctuation is a sensitive factor in determining farmers' plight, but when technology waits in the wings to offer a solution that can be profitable as well as prevent wastage of the produce, there are no takers for it to reap its benefits.

This is precisely what is happening even as the drastic fall in onion prices is putting the farming community in a quandary as they are unable to achieve profit margins.

A sharp fall in demand has drastically brought down onion prices in Karnataka from Rs 5,000-6,000 per quintal to the latest average market price of Rs 1,700 per quintal, while the average retail price ranges from Rs 8 to Rs 18 per Kg.

Experts have blamed this on the fall in exports to neighbouring countries due to drop in demand, while the demand has shrunk in other Indian states - especially Telangana, Odisha, West Bengal and Kerala -- due to them growing their own onions.

Onion farmers in Karnataka spend about Rs 50,000 per acre per yield of about 30-40 quintals, but with the prices falling, they will be unable to achieve profit margins, heaping miseries on them. Farmers send nearly 2,000 bags of onions each on an average to other states by this time of the year, but they're unable to send even half of it due to demand crash. With low prices threatening to persist in the coming days, those without storage options are postponing sales, and risking wastage.

Now, turn to the potential saviour - the technology that Indian Institute of Science (IISc) developed. **P5**

70 BOOKED

Stone-throwing during B'gavi Urs procession

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi

OBJECTIONS allegedly raised against shouting of 'I love Muhammad' slogan led to stone-throwing during a procession to mark the Urs of Mehboob Subhani Dargah on Friday night at Khadak Galli and Khade Bazaar, Belagavi. The Market police registered a case against 10 known and over 60 unknown people in connection with the violence.

The police said that permission was given to the procession organisers to go through a specific route marked already. But the procession changed the route and entered Khadak Galli, a predominantly Hindu locality. During the march, some participants allegedly raised "I Love Muhammad" slogans. When local residents questioned the sloganeering and the diversion of the route, a clash erupted, leading to stone-throwing.

Panic spread among shopkeepers and residents as stones were hurled by the miscreants, eyewitnesses said. While no major injuries and damage to property were reported, the situation quickly escalated before being brought under control by the police. **P5**

EXPRESS READ

Minister's OSD held at Soudha for graft

Bengaluru: The Lokayukta police arrested Jyothi Prakash, officer on special duty (OSD) attached to the energy minister, after his driver was caught accepting a bribe on his behalf | **P4**

3 of Belagavi family drown in Maharashtra

Belagavi: Three of a family from Belagavi drowned and four others went missing in the Arabian Sea during an outing near Shiroda Beach in Sindhudurg, Maharashtra | **P5**

Hyd student shot dead at US gas station

Hyderabad: A student from Hyderabad was shot dead in the US by assailants at a gas station, where he was working part-time, on Friday night, his family said on Saturday | **P5**

Gill new ODI captain; Rohit, Virat in but no long-term guarantees

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Ahmedabad

SHUBMAN Gill was named as the men's ODI captain of the national team, a post previously held by Rohit Sharma. Sharma, whose last act as ODI skipper saw him leading the side to Champions Trophy glory in February-March, was also named in the side scheduled to tour Australia for a three-match 50-over series later this month. Virat Kohli, whose last India tie was that Champions Trophy final against New Zealand, has been included too.

However, Ajit Agarkar, the chairperson of the men's selection committee panel, was noncommittal when asked about Sharma and Kohli's long-term futures in the format. "As far as the 2027 World Cup is concerned, I don't think we need to talk about it today," he said in reference to their futures. But

Shubman Gill & Rohit Sharma

Gill's elevation to the top in the 50-over game is a direct consequence of the upcoming tournament in South Africa. Agarkar conceded that removing Sharma was tough. "You have got to sometimes look at what's coming ahead, where you stand as a team and eventually look at what's in the best interest of the team, whether now or six months later. Like I said, it's tough with one-day cricket at this point. Because if you are going to make that call, you want to try and make it reasonably early and give the other guy enough chances." When asked what the selectors are looking for from Sharma and Kohli from a long-term perspective, Agarkar said: "What they have been doing for years... runs. They are still leaders. But eventually, it's the runs (...) You don't have to think too far. At this point, the team is picked for Australia. We need them to score runs like they have been through their career."

BIG MEET
INDIA-PAK AGAIN, THIS TIME AT WOMEN'S WC

Amidst the off-field tension & drama, two nations face each other in Colombo today. However, there is a high chance of rain | **P15**